



# INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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## News Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 27, 2006

#### INDOT Announces Preferred Alternative For U.S. 31 Kokomo Corridor *Public Comment Welcomed On \$345 Million Major Moves Project*

**INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.** – One of the largest and most anticipated projects in Governor Daniel's Major Moves transportation plan is one step closer to becoming a reality. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have identified Alternative J Modified as the preferred alternative for the U.S. 31 Kokomo Corridor Project. The preferred alternative is identified in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) which was released today. The SDEIS is a follow-up document to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), issued in April 2005.

Public comment is welcome during a 45-day public comment period that begins today and runs through December 11. INDOT and Parsons Transportation Group, the engineering firm managing the environmental phase of the project, will conduct a public hearing Tuesday, Nov. 28 at 6:00 p.m. at the Kokomo High School Auditorium to review the preferred alternative and solicit public input on the project.

Alternative J Modified, which is the preferred alternative, calls for a new, limited-access, four-lane freeway located approximately two miles east of the existing U.S. 31 on the south end and approximately 1.2 miles east of the existing U.S. 31 on the north. The changes made to Alternative J, detailed in last year's DEIS, improves connectivity both to and across the proposed U.S. 31 alignment, safety and operations at the U.S. 35 intersection to the north of Kokomo and reduces the environmental impact of the project. The US 31 Kokomo Corridor Project is located primarily in Howard County and covers a distance of approximately 14 miles.

Specifics of the alternative include interchanges along the alignment at State Route 26, Markland Avenue, East Boulevard Street and Touby Pike. The proposed alternative stretches approximately 13.7 miles from just south of CR 600 N in Tipton County to just north of the U.S. 31 intersection with U.S. 35 to the north of Kokomo.

"The SDEIS recommends a preferred alternative for the U.S. 31 Kokomo Corridor that we now need the public to review," said INDOT commissioner Thomas Sharp. "Public participation has been a key component of this project and was much of the impetus for developing the modifications to Alternative J that led to the preferred alternative. It is still important for the public to provide comment on that preferred alternative before we move ahead with the final recommendation to the FHWA."

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The November 28<sup>th</sup> public hearing will take place from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Kokomo High School Auditorium. It will feature an open house format, during which attendees can review the SDEIS findings and ask questions of project officials. A formal presentation will take place at 6:00 p.m., followed by a comment period.

Visitors to [www.us31kokomo.com](http://www.us31kokomo.com) can view the SDEIS on-line, review detailed maps of the preferred alternative and use an electronic form to comment on the project. Questions and comments can also be made by calling the project office toll free at 866-821-6301, by fax at 317-616-1033, or by sending a letter to:

- U.S. 31 Kokomo Corridor Project  
Parsons  
902 North Capitol Ave., Suite 301  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

The SDEIS can be viewed at the following locations:

- Kokomo-Howard County Public Library, Main Library, 220 N. Union St., Kokomo 765-457-3242
- Kokomo-Howard County Public Library, South Branch, 1755 E. Center Rd., Kokomo 765-453-4150
- Kokomo-Howard County Governmental Coordinating Council (GCC), 120 E. Mulberry St., Ste. 116, Kokomo 765-456-2336
- City Building, Development Department, 100 S. Union St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl., Kokomo 765-456-7375
- INDOT Greenfield District Office, 32 South Broadway, Greenfield 317-462-7751
- INDOT Public Hearings Office, 100 N. Senate Ave., Room N901, Indianapolis 317-232-5457
- Tipton County Public Library, 127 E. Madison St., Tipton 765-675-8761

After reviewing public and agency comments, INDOT will publish the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in early 2007 with a selected alternative and responses to public comments and questions submitted on the DEIS and SDEIS. The FHWA will follow that with a Record of Decision (ROD), allowing final design phase to begin. Construction is expected to begin in 2009 and last approximately 6 years.

For further information about the U.S. 31 Kokomo Corridor Project, contact Andy Dietrick, Director of Communications, Indiana Department of Transportation, at 317-232-5503.

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